

The Tolling Bell

It Was a Mystery, but It Was Explained

By ALBERT TUCKER KENYON

When I was master of the Helen MacAvoy, one of the old time brigs, I was on deck one night keeping a general lookout. The sky was overcast, rendering the night dark, but there was no wind. The sea was smooth only for a ground swell. According to observation taken the previous noon, we were not near any land or sunken rocks—that is, nothing to warrant a warning to ships.

And yet there came across the surface of the water, "mellowed by distance," the sound of a buoy bell. I say a buoy bell because it tolled with that irregularity which sailors would recognize at once as belonging to these bell warnings against dangerous places at sea.

I at once ordered the lead heaved, but "no bottom" was reported. Nevertheless I confess I was very uneasy. Though we were in deep water, we might be near a ledge. However, we could do nothing but keep posted so far as possible as to the depth of water beneath us, and, though we kept lowering the lead, we did not reach bottom.

Meanwhile, though we were scarcely moving, we continued to approach the bell or it approached us, for the sound became gradually more and more distinct.

I would have cast anchor except for the fact that there was no bottom. I could only wait for developments. The watch heard the tolling and were on the qui vive for something to happen. Those below came up one by one and leaned against the rail, listening, or in knots discussed in low tones what the mysterious sound might be.

The strokes continued to approach us or we them till they seemed to be scarcely a cable's length distant. Then we began to make out something black and ahead. I called out to the man at the wheel to port the helm. He did so, but there was so little headway that our course was but slightly deflected. A black hulk passed so near us that we could see it was there, but so far that we could not distinguish what it was.

Nevertheless we all agreed that it was afloat and drifting. Gradually the tolling of the bell became less and less distinct, but did not die out entirely for more than an hour. It was a growling sound and depressed the crew, causing forebodings among the superstitious.

The next morning a vessel appeared far astern of us. She had no sails set, and our glasses failed to reveal any one aboard. A fresh breeze blowing in her direction sprang up, and since on the course we were sailing it was dead ahead I concluded to turn about and investigate this strange ship. As we neared her we failed to see any one aboard of her, and her wheel was revolving as the rudder was swayed by the waves.

If any of the sails had been set they had been blown away. As soon as we came within hearing distance we knew that the tolling of the night before came from her, for we began to hear it again. It was evident that she was a derelict, and I inferred that the rope attached to the clapper of her bell had either rotted away or become loosened, so that as she rose and fell on the seas the bell was tolled.

As soon as we came within easy reach of her I ordered a boat lowered, and I was pulled to the derelict. A ladder was hanging to her side, so we had no difficulty in getting aboard of her.

We found the sails furled and a cable dangling from her bow with the starboard anchor gone, indicating that she had been lying at anchor and had been blown away. This "theory" was borne out by the fact that most of her boats were gone, no fragment of them being left, indicating that the crew had taken them. The ladder hanging over the side was further proof of this. The ship was not in bad condition. Indeed, had I seen any one aboard of her I should not have taken her for a derelict.

There were one thing that puzzled me. The bell rope had not been parted; it was hanging loose. Why it was so I could not divine. Such ropes are always fastened, and I saw no reason why it should have been left unfastened or have become so after the crew had left the ship.

There was nothing open that would jeopardize the ship in case of bad weather. The hatches were in place and the companionway closed. Why this was so I could not understand—that is, if the crew had gone ashore from the anchorage, leaving her alone, and she had been blown off.

Having noted these things, I went below by the forecastle companionway.

There was not a soul below forward. I did not expect to find any one there alive, but I feared I might find one or more dead bodies. I went aft to where the officers' quarters were and looked into every room. The last one I came to, evidently the captain's, gave me a surprise.

On the broad berth a little boy, not a year old, sat looking at me. His eye was bright and his cheeks ruddy. Indeed, he was the picture of health. Seeing me, he broke into a smile. Behind him, with her face to the wall,

lay a woman. I touched her, but she did not move. Pulling her over so that I could see her face, I saw by a slight muscular movement that she was alive.

I had brought a flask of liquor with me in case of such an emergency and poured a little down her throat. She opened her eyes, but soon closed them again.

We had brought some broth in a bottle, which one of the men carried. I called for him to come down to me and fed the woman a little of the broth. She opened her eyes again and this time looked for the child. Seeing him, she looked again at us men and muttered what I took to be thanks that the boy would be saved. We fed her a teaspoonful of broth at a time till she was able to articulate. She was so low that I dared not move her, and yet I would not leave her. We remained near the vessel all day, and before dark I determined to take her and her boy on to our own ship. Wrapping her in blankets, we carried her on deck. The most difficult part of it was to get her into the boat, but we accomplished this by tying her in a hammock and with a rope at each end lowered her. The baby I carried down in my arms. In the same way we took her aboard the MacAvoy.

The derelict was in such good condition that I concluded to put a prize crew aboard of her and send her to Honolulu, not many days' sail to the north of us. There would be nothing to do but provision and water her, though it would be safer to do some pumping, so I sent half a dozen men aboard of her with what they would need and had the pleasure of seeing them hoist her sails and move away northward.

The woman we had rescued was ready the next morning to give the main points of her experience. The ship was commanded by her husband. They had sailed from San Francisco for the Hawaiian Islands. Blown off their course by bad weather, they had come upon an island. Their stores and water being pretty nearly exhausted from being out longer than they had expected, the captain had taken the main part of the crew ashore to see if he could replenish both, leaving only three men aboard. While they were gone a hurricane sprang up from off shore, parted the cable by which the ship was anchored, and she was blown out to sea. The captain's wife helped the men to get down the hatches. This was about all they could do to keep the vessel afloat. The men remained on deck trying to get her under control, but every one of them was washed overboard.

When the storm abated the captain's wife found herself at sea on a derelict. Most of the food left aboard had been damaged. The mother, fearing that before they would be rescued the supply of food necessary to keep them both alive would be exhausted, kept it for her child. She thought over possible ways to attract attention of other vessels, but could devise no way except to loosen the bell rope and let the clapper swing with the waves. This done, she remained in her cabin with her child awaiting such fate as Providence might have for them.

She had no idea how many days she had been afloat. Her little larval grew less and less every day, and, while at first she ate what was absolutely necessary to keep sufficient strength in her to take care of her child, at last, that the little one might live as long as possible to get the benefit of a rescue, she refrained from food entirely. It is probable that had our coming been delayed a few hours she would have died.

I got what information I could from her as to the island on which her husband and his crew had been marooned and judged that it was one of the Sporades on the Polynesian groups. I was bound for the Philippines, so that both these groups lay in my course. It behooved me to find them if possible, not only to reunite this family, but take off the marooned men. A few days' sail brought us to the first of the groups, but we heard nothing of the men we searched for. But when we struck the Polynesian we had better success. The rescued woman was on deck when we passed one of them and recognized it as the island from which she had been blown. We circled it and on a bit of high ground saw with a glass something white fluttering. We turned our course toward it and struck the marooned men.

As we approached we saw them standing on the shore watching us, and presently we heard the cheer, but when we came near enough to make them hear that we had the captain's wife and boy on board they went wild with delight, and I saw one of them drop on his knees. I was sure it was the captain himself.

I shall never forget the meeting between the captain and his wife, to say nothing of his having his boy restored to him. He was so relieved and delighted at their restoration that for some time he did not ask for the story of their rescue. When he had heard it and that his ship was also saved and gone to Honolulu he had nothing further to desire.

We took him and his crew aboard and transferred them to the first ship we met going westward.

From that day to this there are two things connected with the adventure that will never fade from my memory. I shall never cease to hear the melancholy irregular tolling of that ship's bell. But, more than this, the sudden coming upon that picture of innocent budding life, unconscious of the dreadful situation of which it was the center, is stamped indelibly on my mental vision. I had found in the midst of an ocean a ship, on that ship the only conscious thing was a child and on that child's face a smile.

Cookery Notes

Lenten Dishes:
Fish Croquettes.—The remains of any fish, one large onion, a sprig of thyme, three sprigs of parsley, a clove of garlic if you like it. Mince all fine and mix. Season to taste, adding a tablespoonful of butter. Add breadcrumbs in proportion to one-third the quantity. When thoroughly mixed make into balls and flatten like cakes; then dip into beaten egg and cover with breadcrumbs. Fry a delicate brown and serve with cream horseradish or tomato sauce.

Potato Salad of Cold Potatoes.—Cold boiled potatoes can be utilized in a salad, although they do not make as appetizing a salad as one made of the fresh boiled potato marinated with oil and vinegar while hot. For the cold potato salad take three cold boiled potatoes, one large white onion, two hard boiled eggs, nine tablespoonfuls of olive oil, three tablespoonfuls of vinegar, one teaspoonful of salt and four sprigs of nice fresh parsley. A dash of mustard may be added if desired.

Cheese Fondue.—Put two tablespoonfuls of butter into a saucepan and melt without allowing it to brown at all. Then stir in two tablespoonfuls of sifted flour and as soon as smooth pour in half a cupful of fresh milk or cream and let boil about two minutes. Remove from the fire and stir in the yolks of three eggs well beaten; salt and pepper to taste; a grating of nutmeg and a cup of grated Parmesan or Gruyere cheese. Mix all together well and have ready a small pudding dish or individual souffles dishes well buttered. Beat the whites of the eggs to a stiff froth and beat into the mixture and then fill the buttered dishes about two-thirds full. Bake in a moderate oven about twenty-five minutes. Serve immediately, or the mixture, which has risen to the top of the dishes, will shrink or fall.

Stuffed Dried Herring.—Smoked dried herring are popular with a family where they appear stuffed with savory dressing and baked. The bones of the fish are taken out and the place from which they came is filled with a mixture of fine buttered breadcrumbs, finely minced chives and a little parsley. Then the fish are brushed with butter. A very little water is put in the pan and they are baked about fifteen minutes. Serve them with lemon slices.

Orange Salad.—There cannot be a more delicious dinner salad, and certainly hardly a simpler one, than lettuce leaves that are torn, not cut; bits of orange pulp without a trace of white fiber or seeds and a dressing of oil and vinegar, with a scanty sprinkling of sugar.

Baked Halibut.—Any dry white meat fish, such as halibut, is delicious baked in a thick slice that has been dipped in flour, covered with a layer of tomato pulp or with slices of tomato, sprinkled with a little minced green pepper, seasoned with salt and pepper and baked about twenty minutes.

French Fried Stuffed Eggs.—Take four hard boiled eggs, remove the shells, cut a small bit of the end of each and carefully take out the yolk. Mash this yolk with a silver fork until it is perfectly smooth and add to it some salt, pepper, a small piece of butter and some chopped parsley. Replace all in the whites and cover up end. Beat up the white of one raw egg and in this dip the cooked eggs, and afterward roll them in breadcrumbs. Place all in a wire basket and let them cook for two minutes in boiling lard. Serve with tomato or cream sauce.

Clams a la Newburg.—For clams a la Newburg, as a girl makes it in her chafing dish, cut the soft part from each clam and chop the tough part very fine. Melt a tablespoonful of butter in the blazer with a little salt and paprika and add the chopped clams. Simmer them for about ten minutes. Then add two tablespoonfuls of sherry and the soft clams. At the last stir in quickly the yolks of two eggs beaten into half a cupful of cream and let come near a boil, but not quite, to the point. Serve at once.

One Egg Cake.
Cream a half cupful of butter, work in one cupful of sugar, then one egg yolk. When smooth stir in one cupful of milk and gradually two cupfuls of sifted flour with two teaspoonfuls of baking powder. Flavor with vanilla, bake and ice with the following: Beat one cupful of confectioner's sugar slowly into the white of one egg and flavor with a half teaspoonful of vanilla. Stir over the fire a half cupful of grated chocolate, two tablespoonfuls of confectioner's sugar and one tablespoonful of hot water until smooth, then add one more tablespoonful of hot water and stir into the sugar and beaten egg. Nuts may be added, whole or chopped.

Doughnuts.
Beat three eggs till light, add one and one-half cupfuls of sugar. Beat again. Sift one level teaspoonful of soda into a cupful of sour cream, add to the sugar and eggs, then add one small teaspoonful of salt, one teaspoonful of cinnamon and half a grated nutmeg. Mix with sufficient flour to make a soft dough. Roll about half an inch thick, cut out and fry in hot lard. It is a good plan to have the dough cut out all ready to fry before heating the lard.

For the Children

Monkey Listening For a Noise in the Package.



In some of their actions monkeys seem to be guided by something higher than instinct. Darwin describes a trick played on a monkey to show its intelligence. Lumps of sugar wrapped in paper were first given to him. Then for sugar a live wasp was substituted, but after meeting with an unpleasant experience from the wasp the monkey put the next package to his ear to learn if it might be safely opened. This action showed that the monkey had memory and considerable wisdom and had discovered that a wasp buzzes when wrapped in paper.—St. Nicholas.

Signs of the Zodiac.
The zodiac is an imaginary band or belt extending around the circuit of the heavens, having as its middle line the apparent path of the sun. The band extends for a distance of nine celestial degrees on each side of the middle line and is therefore eighteen degrees in width. The name zodiac was given to this celestial belt by the ancients. It comes from the Greek word "zōon," which means "animal," and was applied to the belt because the twelve constellations that form it are named after animals, with five exceptions, or with only one exception if we consider man as an animal, as, of course, he is.

The twelve constellations are Aries, the Ram; Taurus, the Bull; Gemini, the Twins; Cancer, the Crab; Leo, the Lion; Virgo, the Virgin; Libra, the Balance; Scorpio, the Scorpion; Sagittarius, the Archer; Capricornus, the Goat; Aquarius, the Water Bearer, and Pisces, the Fishes. The sun appears to pass through these twelve constellations, one after another, during twelve months, and astronomers have divided the zodiac, therefore, into twelve equal parts of thirty degrees each, the entire circuit of the heavens being, as you know, 360 degrees. The division into twelve equal parts is more for convenience than anything else, for the constellations vary in size, and those parts are called the "signs of the zodiac." The sun enters Aries at the vernal equinox March 20 and passes into the other signs in regular order from month to month, coming around to Aries again the next March.

Flag at Half Mast.
Perhaps you have noticed that whenever a prominent person dies, especially if he is connected with the government, the flags on public buildings are hoisted only part of the way up. This is called half mast. Did you ever stop to think what connection there could be between a flag that was not properly hoisted and the death of a great man?

Ever since flags were used in war it has been the custom to have the flag of the superior or conquering nation above that of the inferior or vanquished. When an army found itself hopelessly beaten it hauled its flag down far enough for the flag of the victors to be placed above it on the same pole. This was a token not only of submission, but of respect.

In those days when a famous soldier died flags were lowered out of respect to his memory. The custom long ago passed from purely military usage to public life of all kinds, the flag flying at half mast being a sign that the dead man was worthy of universal respect.

The Fox and the Crow.
A crow is sitting on the tree. She has some cheese in her mouth. Along comes a sly old fox.
"How I would like to have that cheese," he thinks.
"How can I get it?"
He looks up at the crow and smiles.
"Dear crow, how pretty you are," he says.
"I know you can sing sweetly. Will you sing for me?"
"What a nice fox," thinks the crow.
"No one ever told me before how sweetly I sang."
"I will sing for him."
She opens her mouth to sing. Down falls the cheese to the ground! There, the fox has it! See him run!

Signs of Spring.
Mothers mending pockets.
Sisters trying to sew.
Lest the "taws" and "glassies" through the corners go.
Swearing all the sidewalk.
Big round "bummers" deep.
Where the rolling marbles swift to cover creep.
Little lived up dollies out to take the air.
Merry hoops a-tolling.
Zigzag, here and there.
Children saying "Pepper" fast as rope can swing.
By these signs of springtime you may know 'tis spring.
—Youth's Companion.

ESTATE OF GEORGE PETERSON

September 7, 1911.
Pursuant to the order of ISAAC SHONTAL, Surrogate of the County of Essex, this day made, on the application of the undersigned, Executor of said deceased, notice is hereby given to the creditors of said deceased to exhibit to the subscriber under oath or affirmation, their claims and demands against the estate of said deceased, within nine months from this date, or they will be forever barred from prosecuting or recovering the same against the subscriber.
ANNA M. PETERSON,
Fitch & Fitch, Proctors.

ESTATE OF AUGUSTA SWOL

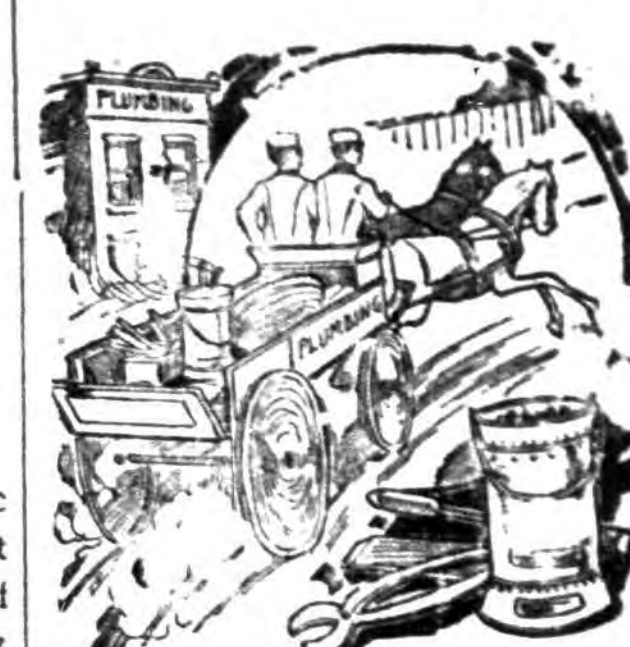
January 8, 1912.
Pursuant to the order of ISAAC SHONTAL, Surrogate of the County of Essex, this day made, on the application of the undersigned, Executor of said deceased, notice is hereby given to the creditors of said deceased to exhibit to the subscriber under oath or affirmation, their claims and demands against the estate of said deceased, within nine months from this date, or they will be forever barred from prosecuting or recovering the same against the subscriber.
GRETCHEN S. FRENOT,
Fitch & Fitch, Proctors.



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